

## ***NextGen Update***

### ***Ohio Aerospace and Aviation Technology Committee, 10/6/15***

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The FAA continues to drive their NextGen *Priorities Joint Implementation Plan* and is doing so in collaboration with the aviation industry. With a continuing goal to increase airport efficiency, reduce flight delays and increase overall safety within the National Air System, FAA has prioritized its portfolio of NextGen projects by working with select airports and operators within the industry to determine and address, critical airspace needs. To view details of this plan and its status, go to [www.faa.gov/nextgen/snapshots](http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/snapshots)

Implementation of NextGen is no small undertaking when you consider our entire air traffic control system is moving from a tower/radar based system to a satellite/GPS based system. Challenges remain in educating and coordinating all of the various stakeholders (pilots and operators, air traffic control, airports, avionics suppliers and the many elected/appointed officials who have oversight responsibilities) on everything from new procedures to the availability and funding of on-board equipment. Nonetheless, the FAA is committed to achieving full implementation and is making progress in spite of these challenges.

In Ohio, opportunities have been presented to enable airports and operators a seat at the “NextGen table”. Of course, one of the obstacles remains funding. The federal government is hopeful that States will begin to view NextGen investment at airports, like any other infrastructure investment and begin to provide some funding assistance. Unfortunately, an effort earlier this year to add funding to the State budget for NextGen and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) was not successful. Indeed, several of us within industry are working hard to promote these opportunities.

NextGen will not only replace 1950’s technology with GPS technology, which by the way, exists in virtually all new cars today, it will create a safer, more environmentally friendly air system. But the benefits go further as this technology also leads to significant economic growth. Today, commercial air carriers evaluate very carefully where new aircraft go and which markets are targeted for new service. Chief among the criteria in determining where the “metal” goes, is how safe and efficient they operate at the local airport.

With a brief review of the FAA’s Implementation Plan, it is obvious that major airports throughout our country are stepping up, working with FAA in building new procedures and some are buying new equipment to welcome NextGen into their local airspace and community airports. Ohio could be further along in FAA’s implementation schedule **but** industry stakeholders must align in this effort. There are far too many requests to improve air traffic congestion at airports across the country, for Ohio to “wait its turn”. Still, progress is being made and Ohio’s aviation industry is being well led by several people and organizations, including JobsOhio, the Ohio Legislature, several Universities and Colleges, as well as many small and large aviation related businesses.

At present, the Ohio State University is working with NetJets and the FAA on various NextGen projects. One such project currently underway is using the power of OSU computers to analyze years of FAA air traffic data in order to determine predictive patterns of flight plan deviation. Results from this research will enable pilots, air traffic control and airports, to develop work around solutions to reoccurring problems like weather or heavy air traffic patterns well in advance of the day of circumstance. Other NextGen related projects include the use of Optimized Profile Decent (OPD) procedures which allow the aircraft to essentially glide through certain airport decent procedures, rather than thrust on and off at various altitudes, thereby reducing noise and fuel burn. The OSU airport is currently evaluating these procedures for use at Don Scott Field, in addition to their already enhanced NextGen education and pilot training curriculum.

NextGen will be part of our day to day travel experience soon enough and the benefits will accrue to all of us who use the national air system. However, Ohio, as the birthplace of aviation, should be leading the charge and not following others in this historic endeavor. Join us in working toward a faster and more efficient implementation of ***NextGen in Ohio.***